**Ethics Reflection**

Answer 2 of the following reflection questions; write at least 150 words on each.

1. How important is consistency in moral reasoning?
2. Does History show we have made moral progress?
3. Are scientists morally responsible for how their discoveries are used? Refer to one or more natural sciences as an area of knowledge?
4. Is ethics more a matter of the head or the heart?

Remember to use Key TOK language and refer to Ways Of Knowing and Areas Of Knowledge

1. How important is consistency in moral reasoning?

Consistency is very important in moral reasoning. Although there are situations where exceptions are plausible, in day to day life, consistency is essential when making ethical decisions.

The theory of being consistent in one’s decisions was first developed by Kant. In his opinion, if you morally agree with a principle, generally through the use of reasoning, it would be an unethical decision to go against it, simply because circumstances proved to be more favorable towards such a decision. For example, if you agreed with the idea that stealing candy from little children was wrong, you would make an unethical decision if you took candy from your little brother. Whether you were starving, or whether your little brother had just insulted you would not make any difference to the moral principle that stealing his candy would be wrong.

I generally agree with Kant. It is important for people to be consistent in their actions, as a general standard of right and wrong is needed. If everything depended on circumstances, there would be no such thing as a moral principle as every situation will be a little bit different. Humanity needs moral principles and it needs standards by which to judge actions.

Does History show we have made moral progress?

History does not show much moral progress. Although on the one hand international laws and agreements such as the human rights have been signed, the basic human behavior has not changed. The 20th century has seen enormous progress industrially and also with information technology. However, with this came both world wars, dictators such as Hitler, Stalin, and Mao Zedong, with the latter killing as many as 40 million people.

On a smaller scale, it is possible to see internet mobbing, willing creations of viruses that destroy many computers across the world. Clearly, humans are just as creative in finding new ways of harming others in order to make themselves feel better. This is reflected in the self-interest theory, stating that a human being will always act first to its own interest and only then, if ever, will consider the interests of others. In my opinion, even the human rights, which sound nice, are often not being followed. When it comes down to choosing between oneself and a moral principle, more often than not humans will choose to act for themselves.